

Missing Oregon teenager Hannah Thomas Garner: finding few facts among fear

Walmart retaliates!

BY VANESSA HOUK

Ashland is a vibrant community in southern Oregon just about fourteen miles north of the California border along the 1-5 corridor. It's a little city of about 21,000 people that lies nestled in a valley surrounded by hills and mountains in an area that seems to draw a fair number of dreamers, artists, poets and writers. Much of Ashland's charm is that it's a place where imaginations are encouraged to wander– the world renowned Oregon Shakespeare Festival is located here, as well as Southern Oregon University. Tourists fill the sidewalks underneath the bright red flags which line Main Street and for many locals, life in Ashland is zesty, colorful and fun. It's a close knit community where neighbors get to know one another and there's a sense of safety even though terrible things

do happen from time to time– some of which go unsolved, like the murder of Dave Lewis whose burnt body was discovered on Memorial Day weekend in 2008. Three years later, twenty-three year old David Grubbs was walking home along a well used bike path and was brutally murdered. Both families await an elusive visitor called justice, which seems to be an infrequent guest in this tourist driven town. Somehow, even still it's a magical place to live, work and raise a family. Just as if it played out on stage, at first the people in this story didn't feel any sense of alarm in late November 2014. On Thanksgiving Day, Jeff Garner of Kilgore, Texas talked to his 17 year old daughter, Hannah Thomas-Garner by phone. She'd just celebrated her birthday the month before and the teenager spoke of her



Hannah Thomas Garner making a “hooks up” symbol.
Photo courtesy Jeff Garner

plans to continue to hunt for a part-time job. An Ashland high school junior and an honors student, Hannah did not have a history of getting into trouble. Two days later, she disappeared. “I talked to her on Thanksgiving day. We texted

back and forth for over an hour and then two days later she comes up missing.”, Jeff Garner said. Hannah's parents split up when she was 4 and the girl spent summer vacations with

HANNAH, 6

Community stands with fired worker.

BY JASON HOUK

While Walmart publicly claims that they respect the rights of workers to speak out, according to complaints, managers at stores in southern Oregon and across the country are doing just the opposite – firing or disciplining employees who participated in legal protests. Ismael Nunez, an 11 year associate has been speaking out for better working conditions at the Klamath Falls Walmart. Nunez is a local leader in the movement for ‘\$15 and Full Time at Walmart.’ Nunez had previously spoke up about understaffing in his store and the struggle for associates to earn a living wage. Nunez and his wife Jennifer Sanchez, another Walmart associate, participated in the Thanksgiving holiday “Black Friday” protests in Medford, Klamath Falls and Portland.

Last November, workers and labor activists staged hundreds of protests at Walmart stores in cities locally and across the U.S., to demand living wages, stable schedules and better working conditions. Employees also accused the company of punishing workers who participate in such labor actions. “I worked at Walmart for 11 years and didn't have problems until I started getting involved along with other employees across the country in campaigns for better wages, better benefits and other improvements at Walmart. “ said Nunez. In retaliation for speaking out, Nunez claims Walmart suspended him without pay. Furthermore, Walmart management called the police to have Nunez escorted from the store. “I told him [assistant manager] that I was scheduled to work another half hour to 7AM and he walked away. All of a sudden, he had called the police and had them escort me outside the store. He told me I would be arrested if I came back. “ Later, Nunez was officially terminated from his position, supposedly for “poor productivity” despite being tasked to do the job of several people.

Keep GMO ban, defend people’s law

BY GREGG MARCHESE

As has been reported, Jackson County is being sued by two GMO alfalfa farmers over the County's Ordinance 635, the GMO crop ban passed this May by 66% of the voting citizens. The plaintiffs, Schulz Family Farms in Gold Hill, and James and Marilyn Frink in White City, are seeking damages for costs and losses under the County law, and to ‘permanently enjoin the enforcement of the ordinance.’ They claim ‘Plaintiffs are entitled to an injunction maintaining the status quo by prohibiting the County from taking any action to implement or enforce the Ordinance.’ Jackson County is the defendant, but other groups and individuals have the legal right of intervention, if they are especially affected by the outcome of the lawsuit. That's certainly the case here, and not just farmers. All citizens of Jackson County are affected by the spread of GMO's and their associated toxic pesticides, and not just people and their children. Livestock, wildlife and the entire ecology can be harmed. Some will be filing for intervention, and this can only benefit the County, since legal costs can be supported

by donations rather than the Jackson County general fund. Also, a better defense can be brought by people and groups who are more motivated, since they would be seriously harmed should the suit win. It is public knowledge that Monsanto, Syngenta and other chemical companies are behind the suit. In a news release of November 18th from the attorneys filing the suit, Markowitz and Herbold, they say agriculture, farming and biotechnology organizations are assisting the suit. We know the likes of Monsanto and Syngenta have a business plan to displace other seed growers from our landscape and the world marketplace, but we the citizens want to protect our local small farmers and local economy from these transnational chemical corporations. The concerned citizens of Jackson County passed the GMO crop ban ordinance 635 to protect the people and lands here, and they don't want it repealed under bullying by money-rich corporations. We defend our food, farms, health and future--more important forms of wealth--with this citizens' initiative, and we insist it remain. The ordinance cannot truly



Record turnout as concerned citizens packed in the federal courtroom to hear arguments to support the defense of 15-119 GE crop ordinance. Photo courtesy Family Farms Coalition

be applied for another 6 1/2 months, until June 2015, since farmers have until then--a 1 year grace period--to remove any offending GMO crops. We refuse any proposal of an injunction to put the ordinance on hold while the lawsuit plays out. This ordinance must stay in effect throughout the legal proceedings, and be applicable after June 6th, 2015, to remove any GMO crops that may remain in the County after the grace period. If Jackson County is exposed to the GMO model of farming once again while the lawsuit proceeds, the

further spread of genetic drift could continue, one of the main things the ordinance is here to prevent. But we hope the lawsuit plays out expediently before June 6th, and is resolved in favor of Ordinance 635, the people's law. Together the plaintiffs seek \$4.2 Million in damages, apart from compensation for legal costs. This number seems excessively high. The plaintiffs are claiming losses for 10 years, the maximum time alfalfa can produce from one planting.

GMO 10

WALMART, 8

Editorials & Opinion

Dear readers

Letter from the Editor

We are so happy to be back at this again-- our little hiatus wasn't planned. It's good that this issue focuses on healthcare since health is what kept us from getting an issue out in January. Around mid-December when the schools have holiday programs and families gather together to hear little people sing, it turned out that there was an abundance of chicken pox here in Ashland-- 26 cases in fact. And at least 4 confirmed cases of whooping cough.

I had chicken pox as a kid, in fact my older sister gleefully reminded me how I brought it home from kindergarten and

infected most of my siblings. About one in three people who get the chicken pox develop shingles at some point in their lives, normally when they are over the age of 60. I had already had one outbreak about six months before, proving that I stay ahead of the curve since I developed it before 45. This second one was vicious and it gave my immune system a wallop. Shingles can be fairly mild or very painful. They can last a few weeks or in my case, a not so fun 6-7 weeks. There isn't a whole lot that is known about why the chicken-pox virus can reactivate so many years later, but trust me when I say that if you can, avoid them like the

plague. I never do anything halfheartedly and it turns out that this includes bouts of sickness. Christmas came and along with some sweet and thoughtful gifts from friends and family, the flu snuck into Chez Houk and my already messed up immune system didn't stand much of a chance against this years terrible strain. I lost several weeks to weakness (the tiniest errand would land me back in bed) and a ridiculous amount of sleep. Since then I've heard from many friends who fought the flu this year and by the time you are reading this, I hope that season is about over. I'm bringing all of this

up as a segway to talk about immunizations. I know this is a polarizing topic for some folks and I know that there isn't much that I can say to you that will get you to immunize your kids. You have your reasons and you're doing what you believe is best for your family. I respect that, but when your choices can potentially hurt others it becomes something we need to talk about. I haven't even mentioned measles yet, They've traveled to Oregon too and it's only a matter of time before we'll see cases here in Jackson County. The trouble with measles is that if you have not been vaccinated and you are exposed, there is

an 80% chance you'll catch it. Considering that babies under the age of one year, anyone with a compromised immune system and anyone who was vaccinated before 1968 is at high risk (early vaccinations did not give lasting protection), this is a serious health issue. Your family is healthy? You still don't think that immunizations are a good idea? I'm going to give my friend, John Fricker the last word on this one. "Bragging about your unvaccinated immune system may be the epitome of white first world privilege." Kindly, Vanessa Houk



Saying 'NO' to LNG

BY LOUISE SHAWKAT

Washington and California said "No!" to natural gas pipelines. Only Oregon remains as an available route to global destruction. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission is accepting comments on its draft evaluation of the Jordan Cove Terminal and Pacific Connector Pipeline. We should demand rejection of this project. History is knocking on our door; what is our answer? Leaders have abdicated their responsibilities. Is it moral to sabotage our climate, support destructive atmospheric pollution, allow countries to disappear, and millions to die from drought? These corporations are ripping us off. Challenging the destruction wrought by fossil fuel corporations is a moral act.

Renewable energy means more local jobs and reduced super profits for amoral corporations. We should promote clear air and they should have less money. Let's demand change in how business is done. We, the people, can promote renewable energy planning and investment for future generations. To confront climate change, all of us need act. We have more power than you may think. It is wrong to deprive our children their right to experience our planet in all its glory. We need intergenerational justice. No one is going to solve this crisis but us.

For more information, visit <http://socan.info>

The time is now to face the consequences

Decisions we make today, individually and collectively, will determine the ability of our planet to support humanity in the decades ahead. We are feeling the consequences of global warming today, but it will only get worse if we continue our 'business as usual' behavior of ever increasing greenhouse gas emissions. It is impossible to be too alarmist about this issue! The math tells us clearly that we have but 13 years to solve our use of fossil fuels completely and be fully weaned. By 2027, globally we need to be using renewable energy sources. The technology is here to achieve this goal – all we need is a commitment to do it. Whether we burn

fossil fuels here or export them overseas to be burned there is no difference, the end result is more global warming and more climate chaos. Recognizing this threat, we must consider the greenhouse gas emissions consequences of every decision we make. The Jordan Cove Pacific Connector LNG Pipeline is a perfect example. By emitting carbon dioxide and methane, this project can only make global warming and climate chaos worse. Just as we must with all efforts to export our fossil fuels, we should just say "No!" Sincerely, Dr. Julia M. Rodríguez-Seidler Toxicologist Chemistry and Pharmacy

Your Social Justice News Resource

The Rogue Valley Community Press (RVCP) is a publication for the working class and a platform for marginalized voices in our community. Through RVCP, we aim to educate people about social justice issues and inspire them to create positive change. Published monthly, RVCP is available through subscription, local retail locations, and street vendors.

Contributions from the community are welcome, including articles, letters to the editor, short poetry, and photography. Send submissions to editor@rvcommunitypress.com. All writing accepted for publication will be edited with due respect for the author's intent. Opinions expressed in RVCP are those of the authors, and not necessarily the editors.

RVCP is a proud member of the North American Street Newspaper Association (NASNA). Contributions to RVCP may be reprinted in other NASNA member publications.

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Contact

Rogue Valley Community Press
258 A Street #1
Ashland, Oregon 97520

(541) 622-9483

editor@rvcommunitypress.com
advertising@rvcommunitypress.com

Staff

Jason Houk
Publisher

Vanessa Houk
Editor-in-Chief

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Life

Where have all the taxes gone?

A call for new budget committee members to help Ashland parce its funds

BY NINA EGERT

*rain extinguishes
the fiery leaves of autumn—
smold'ring fun'ral pyre*

An overnight rainstorm. Run-off gushes down the sidewalk and street, transporting fallen leaves as it carves away at the pavement. Because of the hill's slope, most of those leaves end up in front of my driveway.

I pull my garbage can to the curb, negotiating wheels over broken cement that been worn away a full two inches lower than street level. If I don't leave my cans in this curbside dent, the garbage man refuses to pick them up.

I dash indoors. As I do I hear a street sweeper chugging up the block. "Oh, no!" I think, and run outside—only to discover it has passed by without sweeping away any of the most recent deposit of dead leaves. Indignant, I dial Ashland Public Works, explaining the situation. I've paid my property taxes. I've paid all those extra add-on fees on my utility bill. I feel my block deserves to be swept.

Public Works sends out a charming employee, who explains that Ashland, unlike many other cities, doesn't have monthly street sweeping services. Our two street sweepers make regular passes over main arteries, but residential side streets receive two cleanings per year. Woe be to the block filled with parked cars the unpredictable moment the sweeper passes. Our recently-purchased, fuel-efficient sweeper has a poor turning radius, and can't negotiate near the curb unless cars are parked sufficient distance from one another. But the city can't post 'no parking' warning signs to clear blocks ahead of time—as it doesn't know exact dates when the sweepers will pass.

In the end, the gentleman heroically recalls the street sweeper to remove the leaves from my block. As we wait and watch, I point to the street's water damage, and suggest potential storm drain blockage. I am informed (partly inaccurately) that my street has no storm drains; that Ashland residents have chosen to leave streets unpaved—facts that leave me wondering just where my tax dollars are going, especially as I seem to remember paying fees on my utility bill for these services.

Attuned to my concerns, the gentleman encourages me to join Ashland's citizen

budgetary committee--- even leaving a contact number on my voicemail. Curious, I make the call. With that I begin my odyssey investigating the City of Ashland's finances and services. Phone call after phone call to city employees I am offered a litany of excuses as to why the city does not have enough money to do x...

So where does our tax money go?

No question: Ashland is a delightful place to live—replete with quality-of-life enriching amenities like parks and arts programs. In part this can be attributed to high property values, and the resultant taxes.

However, most property tax monies don't go directly to accounts managed by the city council. Indicated on each tax bill are the funds apportioned off to pay for local schools and libraries, as well as County expenses, and paying off debt (from past municipal bonds.) Only roughly a fourth of our property tax dollars are allocated to city operational expenses. This amount is insufficient to cover the salaries of the police, firefighters, and city employees who run our parks, pave our streets, clean our wastewater, and manage other affairs (or, as in my case, to explain on the phone why there isn't money to provide services that other cities provide their citizens.)

To make up the difference Ashland generates some additional monies from hospitality taxes, gas taxes, building and business permits, speeding and parking tickets. Yet, when totaled, all this income represents less than a third of the city's operating budget. The other two-thirds of Ashland's income is derived from fees and taxes attached to residents' utility bills.

In some ways this system makes sense. Utility bill fees are a way to more fairly spread out the city's operational costs over a wider group of households than just property owners. Furthermore, because the city operates its own electricity company, it is in a position to charge less for actual electricity usage than for-profit companies; by adding on fees and taxes, it make a profit, which can then be redirected to other operational costs. Additional fees and taxes are added to other portions of the bill linked to water, sewer, street user, and storm drain usage.

However, this system has ratepayers confused and

annoyed. Often times the fees and taxes posted on the bill appear to bear no relationship to actual utility use. With fees that can often run more than twice as high as usage charges, this is a sore point with every resident of Ashland to whom I spoke—especially residents who are making an effort to conserve. While in part they do so as an effort to be good citizens, they are also trying to bring down the cost of their bills. Yet, instead, residents see their energy bills rising.

Shouldn't ecologically-minded citizens be rewarded, not punished, for their sound energy practices? Here's the rub: apparently going green has its own set of financial liabilities. As Ashland has linked its primary source of revenue to its citizens' energy usage, when resident conserve, the city's income goes down. So the city council increases fees to utility bills to compensate!

So how should Ashland proceed from here? How do we fund some of the services we are not now receiving? Should we restructure how monies are collected to pay for services? Should we trim services? Should we add on more fees to enhance the services not yet provided? Or just re-word the utility bill so added fees are more clearly separated from usage charges?

The conversation begins here.

First of all, the city council needs some of its citizens to step up and help figure out how to resolve these issues. There are two open positions for the 2015-17 budget committee (a mix of councilmembers and private citizens.) Ashland residents who are interested in applying for these positions are encouraged to log on to the city website: <http://www.ashland.or.us/CCBIndex.asp?CCBID=200>

As for the rest of us—several city council members are open to dialoguing on the topic. Rogue Valley Community Press will enable a blog for readers to comment, disagree, voice frustrations, and hopefully offer some helpful suggestions: <http://rvcommunitypress.com/category/opinion-and-editorials/>

As a final note: for activists deeply concerned with the ills of our planet, perhaps this is a perfect opportunity for us to adhere to the adage: think globally, act locally.

Human rights groups honors Peace House



Herbert Rothschild, Chair of Peace House with board member Shaun Franks holding "I have a dream" award.
Photo courtesy Peace House

VIA CLEAR ACTIONS

Southern Oregon Pride chose Peace House as the recipient of its 2014 Pride Festival funds award. At the festivities in Ashland's Lithia Park bandshell following the parade on Saturday, October 11, Gina DuQuenne, SOPride's founder and president, presented a giant symbolic \$1,000 check to Peace House for its work in promoting social justice and human dignity. Later, the actual contribution was sent and gratefully received.

A second honor came early this year when the Medford MLK Task Force chose Peace House as one of two recipients of its "I have a dream" award. The other honoree was the Center for NonProfit Legal Services in Medford. This year's theme for Medford's MLK Day observance was "The time is always right to do what is right."

The program was held on Sunday, January 18, the day before the national holiday, in the North Medford High School auditorium. Receiving the award for Peace House were board chair

Herbert Rothschild and board secretary Shaun Franks.

Steve Sobhi with the city's task force said, "We can remember Martin Luther King and learn from his teachings and we can become stronger. It starts small. The more we can do together in each community around the country will help and I think it'll spread. That's our hope." We at Peace House are encouraged by the recognition that our work is justifying that hope.

Peace House is a community organization that promotes nonviolent conflict resolution, socio-economic justice, and the inherent dignity of all people. Peace House works to educate residents of Ashland and the Rogue Valley on relevant social justice issues and organize for public advocacy and civic action. They are also the sponsor of Uncle Food's Diner, Ashland's weekly community meal.

Their office is located at 543 S. Mountain Avenue 541-482-6925 and on the web at peacehouse.net.

Volunteer opportunities at Peace House

VIA CLEAR ACTIONS

Below is a list of volunteer opportunities to help sustain Peace House's community services and programs. None require open-ended commitments. There are time estimates attached to each. Please see if any of these needs match your interests and your schedules. If they do, contact Hannah at info@peacehouse.net or 541-482-9625. She will integrate you into the work.

Office work - Managing room rental requests.

checking/processing voice mail, update databases and process bulk mailings.

Representing Peace House on Joint Committee

Joint Committee is composed of two representatives from each of the two organizations that own the building.

Program Work: Uncle Foods Diner. A labor-intensive operation. Prep work in the kitchen

VOLUNTEER, 11



Applause & Hiss



The U.S. has more jails than colleges. *“To put these figures in context, we have slightly more jails and prisons in the U.S. -- 5,000 plus -- than we do degree-granting colleges and universities.”* (Washington Post)

Ninety-seven percent of 125,000 federal inmates have been convicted of non-violent crimes. It is believed that more than half of the 623,000 inmates in municipal or county jails are innocent of the crimes they are accused of. Of these, the majority are awaiting trial. Two-thirds of the one million state prisoners have committed non-violent offenses. Sixteen percent of the country’s 2 million prisoners suffer from mental illness.

If you’re over 45, the world population has doubled in your lifetime. In 1968, the world population was 3,557,000,000. Today, the world population is 7,217,000,000 and grows by over 200,000 daily. (worldpopulationstatistics.com)

A tiny minnow that lives only in backwaters in Oregon’s Willamette Valley is the first fish to be formally removed from Endangered Species Act protection because it is no longer in danger of extinction. The Oregon chub had practically disappeared from the Willamette Valley . Restoring the chub has focused on working with private, tribal and public landowners to protect and restore ponds and backwaters the fish needs to thrive, transplanting fish to expand its range and population, protecting them from predators, and altering dam releases to resemble natural river flows.

A new report on child homelessness in America finds that 2.5 million children experience homelessness annually. Child homelessness has increased 8% nationally, and in 31 states and the District of Columbia. This historic high represents one in every 30 children in the U.S. Child homelessness has reached epidemic proportions in America,” said Dr. Carmela DeCandia, Director of The National Center on Family Homelessness at American Institutes for Research (AIR) which prepared the report.

According to a 2013 Federal Reserve Report, 48% of Americans can immediately come up with \$400 in emergency cash without borrowing it or selling something.



Betty White is older than sliced bread.

Otto Frederick Rohwedder invented sliced bread in 1928, while Betty White was born in 1922. Bread had existed prior, just not in the pre-sliced form.

Berlin grocery store, Original Unverpackt, is an experiment in grocering. They sell upwards of 350 products dispensed from refillable containers, while some of the liquids come in bottles with deposits on them. The store creates zero waste and the customer is able to purchase exactly as much as he or she needs, which contributes to less waste at home. Sara Wolf and Milena Glimbovski crowdfunded the store and, driven by the idea to do “something impossible,” have established a way to economically sell food without contributing to the huge amounts of municipal waste caused by food packaging.

Clean Fuels has passed the Senate Floor! Special shout out to Sen. Lee Beyer for carrying SB 324 on floor! Sen. Beyer’s comment said it best: “It is important to take prudent steps to protect our environment for future generations.”

Thank you to all of our supporters, subscribers, advertisers and friends.

A Boston chapter of Veterans for Peace is suing the city of Boston over a Saint Patrick’s Day peace parade permit. The local Veterans for Peace Chapter 9, Smedley D. Butler Brigade (VFP) filed a First Amendment lawsuit in federal court against the City of Boston because the city has refused to act in a timely way on VFP’s application for a permit to hold its annual St. Patrick’s Peace Parade beginning at noon in Boston on March 15. The delay prevents VFP from being able to effectively organize for its parade and impedes its message. Since 2011, VFP has organized its inclusive, non-discriminatory parade along the same route used by the South Boston Allied War Veterans Council (AWVC), a group that has refused for many years to allow gay rights groups and others, including VFP, to march with identifying signs. According to Patrick Scanlon, the coordinator of the Smedley D. Butler Brigade of VFP, the AWVC parade has begun at 1:00 p.m. in the past, and the city has relegated the VFP’s parade to commencing various distances behind the AWVC parade, forcing it to begin late in the afternoon.

“Veterans for Peace applied on March 25, 2014 for a permit to march at noon this coming March 15 to celebrate St. Patrick’s Day,” said Scanlon. “We asked the City three times, in June, September and October what was happening with our application, and no one from the City ever responded.” The City’s refusal to act on the VFP parade application makes it very difficult for VFP to do all the organizing needed to hold a parade, he said. “Unbelievably, the AWVC has told us in the past that they did not want us in their parade because they did not want the word ‘peace’ associated with the word ‘veteran,’” Scanlon said. “St. Patrick was a man of peace, so the celebration of St. Patrick--the patron saint of Ireland--should be a day to reflect on and celebrate this great saint’s deeds and words. Veterans for Peace celebrates the life of Saint Patrick and the proud Irish traditions without militarism. Our Peace Parade celebrating St. Patrick’s Day is inclusive and open to anyone who would like to walk for peace. As far as we know, this is the only annual peace parade anywhere in the entire country.” VFP uses the phrase “The People’s Parade for Peace, Equality, Jobs, Environmental Stewardship, Social and Economic Justice” to describe the event

Media empowers social movements throughout history

ARTICLE COURTESY OF PBS THE BLACKPRESS

The Pittsburgh Courier was once the country’s most widely circulated black newspaper with a national circulation of almost 200,000. Established in 1907 by Edwin Harleston, a security guard and aspiring writer, the newspaper gained national prominence after attorney Robert Lee Vann took over as the newspaper’s editor-publisher, treasurer, and legal counsel in 1910. By the 1930’s it was one of the top selling black newspapers in the country--as widely read as The Chicago Defender and The Afro-American.

From the beginning, The Courier called for improvements in housing, health and education, and protested the slum conditions in which black people were forced to live in Pittsburgh and elsewhere throughout the nation. In one campaign it pressed for an increase of black physicians in the Pittsburgh area and the opening of an African American hospital to serve the community’s health needs as white facilities were unwilling to treat African Americans.

The Courier sought to empower African Americans economically and politically. In one instance, it featured a front-page column entitled “The Camera,” which counseled African Americans on financial matters. The Courier encouraged the black community to support black organizations such as The National Urban League and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. In an editorial entitled “The Penalty of Unconcern,” The Courier stressed the importance of African Americans taking an active role in their political

destinies. In 1932, Vann helped influence black voters to shift their political allegiance away from the Republican Party, which was often still thought of as the party of Lincoln, and to support the Democratic candidate Franklin D. Roosevelt. The Pittsburgh Courier was one of the first black newspapers to publish both national and local editions. At its height there was as many as 14 editions circulated in states including Texas, Louisiana, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and New York. Many of the 20th century’s most well known and influential black journalists and intellectuals contributed articles, columns, and editorials to The Pittsburgh Courier. George Schuyler joined the staff in 1925 and had a weekly column entitled “Views and Reviews.” Self taught historian Joel A. Rogers’ column “Your History” was a constant source of information concerning the buried or forgotten historical black past. Marcus Garvey, W.E.B DuBois and James Weldon Johnson contributed columns at various times. In later years, Elijah Muhammed wrote a column for The Courier. Zora Neale Hurston was hired to cover the sensational murder trial of Ruby J. McCollum The Courier protested misrepresentations of African Americans in the mainstream media. In the early 1930’s, the paper began a nationwide protest against the Amos n’ Andy daily radio serial. It petitioned to remove the program from the air and published scathing editorials denouncing the program’s negative portrayals of black people

Ashland Parks and Rec. launches new ‘Story Map,’ highlighting historic sites

Ashland Parks and Recreation is excited to launch a new Story Map that highlights the historic sites and features of Lithia Park. The map is available on the Ashland Parks and Recreation home page at www.AshlandParksandRec.org, or directly at gis.ashland.or.us/LithiaHistoric. “It’s important to not only preserve the history of Lithia Park, but to share it with the community and tourists,” said Ashland Parks & Recreation

Director, Michael A. Black. The map includes many other historic landmarks of Lithia Park. The Story Map was created by Lea Richards, GIS Analyst for the City of Ashland. For more information on story maps, please visit storymaps.arcgis.com/en/articles/what-is-a-story-map. All of the City of Ashland GIS Web Applications are available at www.ashland.or.us/GISWebApps.

Analysis

What do insanely poor people buy, that ordinary people know nothing about?

BY RUGTOAD

When you are poor, the “system” is set up to keep you that way. For example, how much do you pay to cash your paycheck? If you aren’t and have never been poor, you probably said “Pay?,” because you don’t. Your check probably goes via direct deposit right into your checking account. But what if you have bad credit history such that you can’t get a checking account? Well, now you have to go to a check-cashing service and pay money to get it. This means that, out of your already low check, you get to a few dollars down. If you are lucky, you can find a grocery store that will give you fee back in certificates to the store, but even then they might charge you a small fee on top of that. How about this: How much is your car insurance? Did you know that if you bad credit it’s higher? So, now that you are poor, you get to pay more money for your insurance. And you’ll find that the only landlord that will rent to you (at a place not in the absolute worst part of town) will ask you to double your deposit, since you’ve had financial trouble in the past. It gets worse. Your bad credit combined with your shaky job history and barren wasteland of a savings means your options for transportation are severely limited. If you need a car, you will have to go to one of those lots. You ever drive a car into the ground? I mean, put 200k miles on it and drive it until it just doesn’t want to go anymore? Then you take your jalopy into

the local, reputable Honda dealer and they give you 20 bucks and a Snickers bar for it. What do you think they do with it? They certainly don’t sell it at their lot, that’s for damned sure. They aren’t going to park your ridiculous hoopdie next to their brand new Accords and Civics, just being in the same vicinity of it drops their value. No, they usually have a deal with (or ownership in) one of those lots. Those lots are in bad parts of town. The office looks like a tool shed. They offer financing at rates that would make a loan shark uneasy. Their cars usually have a lot of miles and are “guaranteed” only to make it off the lot. Some of them will even rig up the cars with tracking devices so their repo men can find you easier. That lot will sell this hunk-a-junk to the kind of person who, more than anyone else, needs it to start every day and get them to

What’s on your mind?

The Rogue Valley Community Press welcomes your articles, letters, PSA’s, poems, artwork and events.

Send your stories to editor@rvcommunitypress.com, or call the RVCP hotline at 541-622-9483.

Thank You!

work. When your car breaks down, what do you do? You probably take it to the shop to get it fixed. What if you had no money, and no credit cards? And what if you were a week into a job in which you were as replaceable as a number 2 pencil? Well, hope you don’t have any kids. At least then you might be able to call a friend or family member to help you out. If you have kids, now you have to find someone to help you drive them to your child care provider (which you can barely afford as it is anyhow) and take you to work, then pick you and your kids up. If you don’t have kids, you can probably at least take a cab today. And then you can fall into another trap: You can get a short-term loan! At 300% APR! People who have credit don’t get these loans because they are predatory and shitty. They take advantage of people who have no other options. Ordinary people may know a little about them, but usually just say “What kind of stupid person gets themselves into that?” without realizing that it’s not a stupid option so much as a last resort for many people in poverty. When you are poor...you pay for everything...many things that other people don’t have to pay for or just don’t have to worry about. This is one of the fatal flaws of the bootstrap-mentality in which fixing poverty is simply a matter of will. When you’re that far down, the deck is stacked entirely against you. The world is rigged to keep poor people poor.

One in five U.S. children now rely on food stamps

BY ELVINA NAWAGUNA

The number of children in the United States relying on food stamps for a meal spiked to 16 million last year, according federal data, signaling a lopsided economic recovery in which lower income families are still lagging behind. The roughly one in five children who received food stamps in 2014 surpassed pre-recession levels, when one in eight or 9 million children were on food stamps, according to the U.S. Census survey of American families released in February. Republicans in Congress have sought to cut back on the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program or food stamp program as part of a larger plan to balance the budget. Early last year lawmakers proposed \$40 billion in cuts from the program over 10 years. The final farm bill signed into law trimmed \$8.6 billion

from the program, eliminating benefits for about 850,000 people, according to estimates by anti-hunger advocates. Other findings of the survey show a rapidly changing America in which more children are being raised in single-parent homes and more young people are delaying marriage. Of the 73.7 million children under 18 in the United States, 27 percent were living in single parent homes last year, tripling the 9 percent in 1960. The number of marriages also dwindled last year with less than half of households in America made up of married couples, compared to three-quarters in 1940, the survey found. The median age for people first getting married in 2014 was 29 for men and 27 for women up from 24 and 21 respectively in 1947.



"Yes, the planet got destroyed. But for a beautiful moment in time we created a lot of value for shareholders."

Support the Children’s Health Insurance Program

ALEX BUDD
OREGON ACTION

Working families are the engines of our economy. When people have good jobs, when we can educate our kids, care for our families, afford health care, shop in our neighborhoods and retire with security, that’s what drives the economy forward. That’s not what’s happening now. With current economic growth going primarily to the wealthiest, the rest of us are left with stagnant wages, unaffordable healthcare, and the rising cost of living. Too often, we’re forced to choose between the basics, including putting food on the table or being able to see the doctor when we are sick. That’s why policies that

are proven to benefit working families are a public good and a boon to our economy. The Child Health Insurance Program is one of those vital policies. CHIP has cut the rate of uninsured kids by half. With low premiums, deductibles and the preventive care children need, CHIP has improved the health and futures of millions of American kids. With CHIP, working parents know that a job loss won’t mean losing their children’s health insurance and a sick kid won’t mean bankruptcy. “As guardians of 3 grandchildren since 2010, my husband and I have appreciated all the help from CHIP,” says Barbara, who lives in Medford. Before they had CHIP coverage for

their grandchildren, she had to pay as much as \$900 out of pocket for dentist appointments; since having CHIP, they’ve been able to get needed basic care, and also vital mental health services. “My husband and I could never have afforded these expenses on our own and because of the CHIP coverage the kids are healthy and happy. Or take the story of Grace and Scott, whose two children have been covered by CHIP for several years. Without the medical care provided by CHIP, one of them would have to give up their own private health insurance in order to afford coverage for their children. Even taking care of small things,

like a broken tooth, would have been a serious financial challenge before, but thanks to CHIP, they’re able to keep everyone healthy. As Grace said, “We need this because how do kids become healthy and how to parents continue to cover them without this program? I’m just worried about the kids.” Unfortunately, CHIP is set to expire in September of this year, unless it is renewed for another four years by the U.S. Congress. The end of the program would be devastating for Barbara, Grace, and millions of other families across the country who depend on CHIP to keep their kids healthy. It’s up to us to support strong families in strong communities. That means

Congress renewing funding for CHIP so it doesn’t end this year – that way millions of our kids will keep getting the affordable health care they need. That’s why we’re calling on Representative Walden to renew funding for this vital program that keeps our kids healthy and gives working parents peace of mind. This is how we build strong families, strong communities and a strong economy, because we all do better when we all do better. Join us in asking Rep. Walden to publically support and vote for renewal for CHIP funding this year. You can call his Medford office at 541-776-4646.

Hannah

CONTINUED FROM 1

her dad and extended family in Texas. Leaving was always hard, so the two devised a special signal where they would curl their index finger so that it was shaped like a hook– they called it “hooks up” which meant “I love you.” They signaled that message to each other many times as Hannah boarded airplanes to

seeing her leave. There’s no recollection of her leaving the party so there’s no real time of when she left,” Jeff Garner said. Instead of taking off running that Saturday night, Sylvia Davis went home. Thibert and Silver left too and did not resurface again in Ashland until two days later on Monday, December 1. Hannah did not come down the stairs for breakfast that Sunday morning. After discovering that her daughter is missing, Jamie Daugherty called the police. After

they have seen Hannah since the night of November 30 and while police insist it’s a good lead, as much as he wants to believe that she is okay, Hannah’s dad soon doubts its credibility. Hannah’s seen at the party near the quarry, her car is found near Mt. Shasta and then there’s nothing to go on. Her family and friends do all they can to get media attention to help find the missing girl. Social media is used and both Facebook and Twitter pages are created and yet



Ashland High School students and faculty formed a heart to convey how much they love and miss Hannah “Moose” Thomas-Garner. Photo by Larry Stauth, Rock Solid Photography

go home back to Oregon. Ashland loves a parade and the annual Festival of Lights parade was held in the middle of the downtown on that Friday after Thanksgiving, a beloved tradition in which most of the downtown is awash with little white lights after a small but cheerful line of floats, carolers and Santa and Mrs. Claus make their way down Main Street towards the city plaza and friends gather in small groups along the parade route. On Saturday, November 30, unbeknownst to parents, some local teens were making festive plans of their own which included a rave party in an area that’s often used for such gatherings out at one of the old rock quarries on Dead Indian Memorial Road. Thomas-Garner told her parents she was heading to bed early that night and like many teens before her, she slipped out of her house sometime that evening. She met up with several friends at the party including 15 year old Sylvia Davis, 19 year old Andrew Thibert from Weed and 19 year old Richard Silver from Dunsmuir. The two men had driven over from the Mt. Shasta area in northern California. Sometime before that evening, three teenage girls had made a pact to run away together. One girl backed out. Hannah and Sylvia planned on leaving together, but then something happened on the night of the party that changed those plans. Later Sylvia would tell police that Andrew Thibert said that Hannah could not travel with the three of them. At some point in the evening Hannah vanished. There was a DJ out at the quarry and kids come and go. Hannah was there and then she wasn’t. “There have been people there at the party who remember her being there, but nobody recalls

searching and talking to some of Hannah’s friends, police said that Hannah was a runaway. However, not everybody agrees with that theory. Hannah’s mother said that while she took her car keys, license and cell phone, there’s no evidence to suggest that Hannah packed a bag with clothing, makeup or other necessities when she left home. Instead of finding a note explaining why her daughter ran away, Daugherty discovered medication Hannah had been in the middle of taking, her debit card and other items that she knows her daughter would have wanted to keep with her. Although it is not a crime to run away in Oregon, Hannah becomes case 14-3068 and is listed as missing, endangered. Her family begins a long journey toward answers. Awakened by a phone call in the middle of the night on December 1, the family learns that Hannah’s car, a 2012 Ford Focus, has been found by law enforcement in Siskiyou County near the city of Mt. Shasta which is about 75 miles away. “The car- the windshield was busted out. There were dents on the side and dents on the hood,” Garner explained. The windshield is broken. Inside police find Hannah’s keys and cell phone. The SIM card has been removed from the phone. Meanwhile Thibert and Silver had been in touch with Sylvia Davis and the men arrange to meet with Davis in Ashland. Sometime on Monday December 1, they pick her up and the three head towards Humboldt County in Thibert’s white pickup truck. Back in Siskiyou County, a witness tells police that he picked up a young girl matching Hannah’s description and dropped her off near Dunsmuir, about 9 miles north of Mt. Shasta. This one single sighting is the only time anyone says

even with all of the community support and interest there doesn’t seem to be anything that brings them closer to finding out what happened to her. “After Shasta, I don’t think anybody knows”, Jeff Garner said. Sylvia Davis is reported as a runaway on December 2 and at first police believed that the girls were together, but by Saturday December 6th, authorities locate Sylvia Davis, Andrew Thibert and Richard Silver near the Mattole Beach Campground in an isolated area north of Ferndale that is known as the Lost Coast. Thibert is arrested for crimes of a sexual nature. Silver is not arrested. All three tell police that Hannah Thomas-Garner was never with them in Humboldt County. Weeks pass and there’s no new sightings. Friends and family say that if Hannah did leave on her own volition, she would certainly have contacted someone by now, They hang on to the idea that surely they will hear something from her any day now. Candlelight vigils are held in Oregon and Texas in the hope that they will spark some new information. Christmas comes and goes. Hannah is still missing. At the end of December, a group calling themselves “Team Hannah” meets at the Ashland Police Department on a freezing cold morning to ask APD to reclassify Hannah’s case. Deputy Chief Tighe O’Meara meets with a group of about 35 concerned citizens and spends most of an hour answering their questions about Hannah’s disappearance. When asked if the police have evidence that points to Hannah being alive, O’Meara said, “We still feel very strongly that the information we’ve received from people in northern California is credible and that Hannah was seen in Mt Shasta and was given a ride

to Dunsmuir and the details provided by these folks when they had no inside info on this case makes this credible.” He explained that police detectives searched the area of the party immediately following her disappearance and that the Jackson County Sheriff’s Office planned to do a thorough search that same day. Some weeks later further searches continue until police say they have searched the area a half dozen times. Nothing significant is found. Family and friends express concern that evidence in the case has not been tested for evidence since she is said to be a runaway. “Hannahs car, from the beginning was processed for evidence”, O’Meara says. “There’s a few issues at play here. One, again if something happened to her in California and she was the subject of criminal activity in California that would go to California labs”, O’Meara says. “If we were to introduce it to the Oregon state police labs, their policy is that they generally will not analyze evidence in a case that is not known to be criminal. Any DNA evidence, any forensic evidence, would not be analyzed in this situation.” A month passed. Then two

months. Hannah’s friends and teachers organize a message at the high school in the hope that it might reach her. During a twenty minute advisory class, students file out in groups of two onto the football field where there is an outline of a heart in the middle of the field. Hannah’s friends stand in the middle of the heart and hold up placards which have big letters written on them. They stand together and when they hold them up they spell out Hannah’s nickname, “Moose”. Students inch along the edges of the outline as though it is a ceremonial labyrinth until the entire outline of the heart is full and there’s so many of them that they have to double up. Before heading back to class they all squish together so that an aerial photo can be taken. On their way back to class about a half dozen girls pause and talk to Hannah’s mom. Their expressions tell a story of deep concern. Halfway across the country, family waits for the phone to ring. “I will never give up,” Jeff Garner says. “Hooks up for Hannah”.

"Where justice is denied,
where poverty is enforced,
where ignorance prevails,
and where any one class is
made to feel that society is
in an organized conspiracy
to oppress, rob, and degrade
them, neither persons nor
property will be safe."

Frederick Douglass - 1886



“Human history becomes more
and more a race between
education and catastrophe.”

H.G. Wells - 1920

Check Winter Meeting times online at:
www.occupymedfordoregon.org
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Occupy Medford is a local
non-partisan movement in solidarity
with democratic movements
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99% STRONG!

News

Rogue Valley residents speak loudly on LNG

Over 350 community members attended DEQ water quality meeting on proposed LNG Export

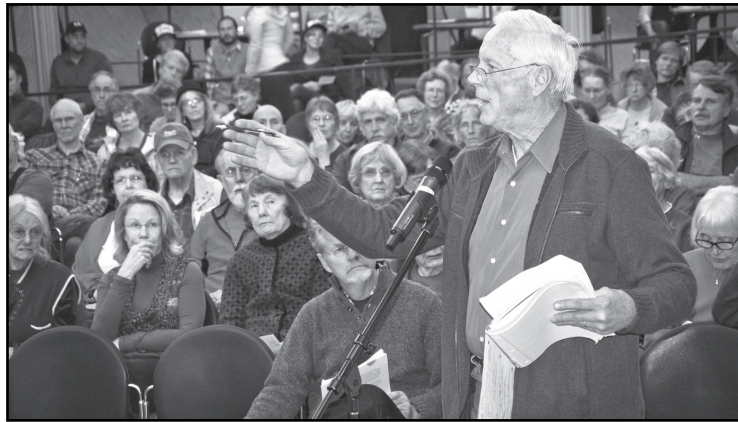
VIA ROGUE CLIMATE

Hundreds concerned about the impacts of the proposed Jordan Cove project to our streams, rivers, and estuaries posed questions to DEQ. Over 350 concerned community members crowded into North Medford High School earlier this month to attend a public information meeting hosted by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) regarding permits for a proposed gas export terminal and pipeline. Based on an early show of hands all but five people in attendance were opposed to the proposed project.

Community members expressed serious concerns about what impacts the project would have on our waterways and our local communities, and asked questions about a range of water quality issues from adding additional pollution from pipeline construction to already polluted waters, to the long term impacts a warming climate on water availability and salmon habitat.

The DEQ is currently asking for public comment on a water quality certification that is required by DEQ for federal Clean Water Act permits sought by the Jordan Cove Energy Project that would impact Oregon waters. The meeting last night was for the DEQ to answer questions about their role in evaluating a water quality certification for the proposed Jordan Cove and Pacific Connector gas export project and how the agency intends to evaluate substantial impacts that would result from the pipeline and terminal.

The proposed export terminal and 230-mile pipeline to transport fracked gas from Malin to Coos Bay, would traverse through the watersheds of the Klamath, Rogue, Umpqua, Coquille and Coos Rivers. The project would involve a 36" pipeline crossing 400 different waterways,



Ray Seidler speaks at DEQ Hearing
Photo by Matt Witt

clearing important streamside forests and dumping sediments into clear water streams. Additionally the terminal site would require extensive new dredging in the sensitive estuary of Coos Bay. In total the result would be more than 5.7 million cubic yards of marsh, stream channel and bay bottom being moved, removed and relocated in our clear water streams, rivers, wetlands and estuaries.

"The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality has a critical role to play in protecting waterways that all Oregonians depend on," said Forrest English of Rogue Riverkeeper. "We are all counting on the agency to take a hard look at the substantial impacts to salmon habitat and clean water that would result from this project and make the right decision by saying no. The turn out last night demonstrated that the public is not in favor of this project, and we hope that the agencies and will listen."

The Jordan Cove project, proposed by a Canadian energy company called Veresen, would construct a gas export terminal and power plant on a sand spit in Coos Bay, as well as a 230-mile gas pipeline from Malin. The project would pipe fracked gas from Canada and the Rockies through southern Oregon to the terminal on the coast, where the gas would be liquefied using tremendous amounts of energy and shipped

overseas for Asian markets. The pipeline would require a 95-foot wide clearing through public and private property, using eminent domain laws to take away the property rights of nearly 300 Oregon landowners.

"I'm very concerned about the impacts this project could have on the salmon watersheds of southern Oregon," said Stuart Warren, a professional fishing guide and volunteer with Rogue Climate. "From the damage to waters like the Rogue River and Coos Bay to the effect a warming climate would have on the cold water salmon need, I can't see how Oregon could allow this project."

The certification under consideration by DEQ is one of many permits, authorizations or certifications from local, state and federal regulators that the Jordan Cove project has yet to obtain before any final decision can be made about the project moving forward. Local organizations including Rogue Riverkeeper, Rogue Climate, Southern Oregon Climate Action Now, in addition to local landowners will continue to organize education efforts and opposition to the pipeline because of impacts to waterways, our climate, the American economy, and on local landowners.

For more information, contact Forrest English, Rogue Riverkeeper 541-261-2030 Hannah Sohl, Rogue Climate 541-840-1065

Roundup-Ready GM crops leave monarch butterflies close to extinction

VIA SUSTAINABLE PULSE

Center for Food Safety (CFS) released a detailed, 80 page scientific report, "Monarchs in Peril: Herbicide-Resistant Crops and the Decline of Monarch Butterflies in North America."

The comprehensive report reveals the severe impacts of herbicide-resistant genetically engineered (GE) crops on the monarch population, which has plummeted over the past twenty years. The report makes it abundantly clear: two decades of Roundup Ready crops have nearly eradicated milkweed – the monarch caterpillar's sole source of food – in cropland of the monarch's vital Midwest breeding ground. At the urgent request of scientists and public interest groups, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is currently considering listing the monarch as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act.

The report was presented to Congress at an expert briefing on the decline of monarchs. "This report is a wake-up call. This iconic species is on the verge of extinction because of Monsanto's Roundup Ready crop system," said Andrew Kimbrell, executive director at Center for Food Safety. "To let the monarch butterfly die out in order to allow Monsanto to sell its signature herbicide for a few more years is simply shameful."

Monarch population numbers have fallen by 90% in less than 20 years. This year's population was the second lowest since careful surveys began two decades ago. The critical driver of monarch decline is the loss of larval host plants in their main breeding habitat, the Midwestern Corn Belt. Monarchs lay eggs exclusively on plants in the milkweed family, the only food their larvae will eat

Monarch butterflies have long coexisted with agriculture, but the proliferation of herbicide-resistant GE crops is threatening that balance. Monsanto's glyphosate-resistant Roundup Ready corn and soybeans have radically altered farming practices, sharply increasing the extent, frequency and intensity of glyphosate use on farm land. Glyphosate – one of the very few herbicides that kills common milkweed – was little used two decades ago, but has become by far the most heavily used herbicide in America thanks to GE Roundup Ready crops. As a result, corn and soybean fields in the Corn Belt have lost 99% of their milkweed since just 1999.

"The alarming decline of monarchs is driven in large part by the massive spraying of glyphosate herbicide on genetically engineered crops, which has virtually eliminated monarch habitat in the corn and soybean fields that dominates the Midwest landscape," said Bill Freese, Center for Food Safety science policy analyst and co-author of the report. "Glyphosate is the monarch's enemy number one. To save this remarkable species, we must quickly boost milkweed populations and curtail the use of herbicide-resistant crop systems."

Milkweed does grow outside of cropland, but there is too little habitat to support a viable monarch population. First, corn and soybeans dominate the Midwest landscape, leaving little area in roadsides, pastures, and other land where milkweed grows. Second, monarchs produce almost four times more eggs per plant on milkweed within agricultural fields than on milkweed growing elsewhere.

"Milkweed growing in Midwest cropland is essential to the monarch's continued survival. Without milkweed, we'll have no monarchs," said Dr. Martha Crouch, biologist with Center for Food Safety and co-author of the report. "Very few of us fully understand the ecological impacts of our food system, but we need to pay attention. The decline of the monarch is a stark reminder that the way we farm matters."

As the monarch population declines other threats have greater impacts, and the butterflies are less likely to bounce back from adversity. For example, a winter storm in 2002 killed an estimated 468-500 million monarchs. A similar storm today could completely eliminate today's much reduced monarch population.

Center for Food Safety and the Center for Biological Diversity, along with the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation and renowned monarch scientist Dr. Lincoln Brower, filed a legal petition with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to protect monarchs as threatened under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). In December 2014, the Service responded to petition request and announced that ESA listing may be warranted, an important first step towards securing stronger protections for monarch butterflies.

KSKQ 89.5 FM

Community Radio for the Rogue Valley
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The Trans-Pacific Partnership must be defeated

BY SENATOR BERNIE SANDERS

The Trans-Pacific Partnership is a disastrous trade agreement designed to protect the interests of the largest multi-national corporations at the expense of workers, consumers, the environment and the foundations of American democracy. It will also negatively impact some of the poorest people in the world.

The TPP is a treaty that has been written behind closed doors by the corporate world. Incredibly, while Wall Street, the pharmaceutical industry and major media companies have full knowledge as to what is in this treaty, the American people and members of Congress do not. They have been locked out of the process.

Further, all Americans, regardless of political ideology, should be opposed to the “fast track” process which would deny Congress the right to amend the treaty and represent their constituents’ interests. The TPP follows in the footsteps of other unfettered free trade agreements like NAFTA, CAFTA and the Permanent Normalized Trade Agreement with China (PNTR). These treaties have forced American workers to compete against desperate and low-wage labor around the world. The result has been massive job losses in the United

States and the shutting down of tens of thousands of factories. These corporately backed trade agreements have significantly contributed to the race to the bottom, the collapse of the American middle class and increased wealth and income inequality. The TPP is more of the same, but even worse.

During my 23 years in Congress, I helped lead the fight against NAFTA and PNTR with China. During the coming session of Congress, I will be working with organized labor, environmentalists, religious organizations, Democrats, and Republicans against the secretive TPP trade deal.

Let’s be clear: the TPP is much more than a “free trade” agreement. It is part of a global race to the bottom to boost the profits of large corporations and Wall Street by outsourcing jobs; undercutting worker rights; dismantling labor, environmental, health, food safety and financial laws; and allowing corporations to challenge our laws in international tribunals rather than our own court system. If TPP was such a good deal for America, the administration should have the courage to show the American people exactly what is in this deal, instead of keeping the content of the TPP a secret.

Walmart

CONTINUED FROM 1



Ismael Nunez talks to reporters and supporters at a press conference in front of Medford Walmart Photo by Jason Houk

Since his termination, hundreds of signatures have been delivered to Walmart management in support for Nunez. People from all across the state have called and left messages for the store manager asking for Nunez to be rehired. Community organizers have staged protests at Walmarts in Klamath Falls and Medford and plan to take the issue further.

“It is a simple request that we ask that Walmart adhere to

their anti-retaliation policy,” said community member Austin Fohnagy. Fohnagy is among dozens of local community members who have protested Nunez’s termination. “Walmart is the largest retailer in the area and they need to act like a fair, respectable employer. I wouldn’t be protesting or collecting signatures for a petition if I didn’t think they can hold themselves to that standard.”

10 ways the TPP would hurt working families

Ten ways the Trans-Pacific Partnership would hurt working families:

1. TPP will allow corporations to outsource even more jobs overseas. According to the Economic Policy Institute, if the TPP is agreed to, the U.S. will lose more than 130,000 jobs to Vietnam and Japan alone. But that is just the tip of the iceberg. Service Sector Jobs will be lost. At a time when corporations have already outsourced over 3 million service sector jobs in the U.S., TPP includes rules that will make it even easier for corporate America to outsource call centers; computer programming; engineering; accounting; and medical diagnostic jobs. Manufacturing jobs will be lost. As a result of NAFTA, the U.S. lost nearly 700,000 jobs. As a result of Permanent Normal Trade Relations with China, the U.S. lost over 2.7 million jobs. As a result of the Korea Free Trade Agreement, the U.S. has lost 70,000 jobs

The TPP would make matters worse by providing special benefits to firms that offshore jobs and by reducing the risks associated with operating in low-wage countries.

2. U.S. sovereignty will be undermined by giving corporations the right to challenge our laws before international tribunals.

The TPP creates a special dispute resolution process that allows corporations to challenge any domestic laws that could adversely impact their “expected future profits.” These challenges would be heard before UN and World Bank tribunals which could require taxpayer compensation to corporations. This process undermines our sovereignty and subverts democratically passed laws including those dealing with labor, health, and the environment.

3. Wages, benefits, and collective bargaining will be threatened.

NAFTA, CAFTA, PNTR with China, and other free trade agreements have helped drive down the wages and benefits of American workers and have eroded collective bargaining rights.

The TPP will make the race to the bottom worse because it forces American workers to compete with desperate workers in Vietnam where the minimum wage is just 56 cents an hour.

4. Our ability to protect the environment will be undermined.

The TPP will allow corporations to challenge any law that would adversely impact their future profits. Pending claims worth over \$14 billion have been filed based on similar language in other trade agreements. Most of these claims deal with challenges to environmental laws in a number of countries. The TPP will make matters even worse by giving corporations the right to sue any of the nations that sign onto the TPP. These lawsuits would be heard in international tribunals bypassing domestic courts.

5. Food Safety Standards will be threatened.

The TPP would make it easier for countries like Vietnam to export contaminated fish and seafood into the U.S. The FDA has already prevented hundreds of seafood imports from TPP countries because of salmonella, e-coli, methyl-mercury and drug residues

But the FDA only inspects 1-2 percent of food imports and will be overwhelmed by the vast expansion of these imports if the TPP is agreed to.

6. Buy America laws could come to an end.

The U.S. has several laws on the books that require the federal government to buy goods and services that are made in America or mostly made in this country. Under TPP, foreign corporations must be given equal access to compete for these government contracts with companies that make products in America.

Under TPP, the U.S. could not even prevent companies that have horrible human rights records from receiving government contracts paid by U.S. taxpayers.

7. Prescription drug prices will increase, access to life saving drugs will decrease, and the profits of drug companies will go up.

Big pharmaceutical companies are working hard to ensure that the TPP extends the monopolies they have for prescription drugs by extending their patents (which currently can last 20 years or more). This would expand the profits of big drug companies, keep drug prices artificially high, and leave millions of people around the world without access to life saving drugs. Doctors without Borders stated that “the TPP agreement is on track to become the most harmful trade



pact ever for access to medicines in developing countries.”

8. Wall Street would benefit at the expense of everyone else.

Under TPP, governments would be barred from imposing “capital controls” that have been successfully used to avoid financial crises. These controls range from establishing a financial speculation tax to limiting the massive flows of speculative capital flowing into and out of countries responsible for the Asian financial crisis in the 1990s

In other words, the TPP would expand the rights and power of the same Wall Street firms that nearly destroyed the world economy just five years ago and would create the conditions for more financial instability in the future.

Last year, I co-sponsored a bill with Sen. Harkin to create a Wall Street speculation tax of just 0.03 percent on trades of derivatives, credit default swaps, and large amounts of stock. If TPP were enacted, such a financial speculation tax may be in violation of this trade agreement.

9. The TPP would reward authoritarian regimes like Vietnam that systematically violate human rights.

The State Department, the U.S. Department of Labor, Human Rights Watch, and Amnesty International have all documented Vietnam’s widespread violations of basic international standards for human rights. Yet, the TPP would reward Vietnam’s bad behavior by giving it duty free access to the U.S. market.

10. The TPP has no expiration date, making it virtually impossible to repeal.

Once TPP is agreed to, it has no sunset date and could only be altered by a consensus of all of the countries that agreed to it. Other countries, like China, could be allowed to join in the future. For example, Canada and Mexico joined TPP negotiations in 2012 and Japan joined last year.

Single-payer activists descend on Salem to keep grassroots movement alive

Sen. Michael Dembrow, the movement’s leader in the state Legislature, has reintroduced legislation to implement single-payer in Oregon. Broader support exists for a bill to provide state money to figure out how universal healthcare might work and be paid for in Oregon.

BY CHRIS GRAY - LUND REPORT

Labor unions and religious organizations joined Health Care for All Oregon to shut down Court Street in front of the Oregon State Capitol on Wednesday, for what’s become a biennial rally in support of a state single-payer health insurance program to replace the patchwork system currently in use in Oregon.

“Healthcare is a human right! We shouldn’t have to beg for it,” said Fernando Gapasin, the state chairman of the United Auto Workers and National Writers Union. He said collective bargaining could be much more productive if workers and employers no longer had to haggle over whether employees could receive quality health insurance.

Single-payer activists have kept up their grassroots efforts, despite the national health reform law that reduced the number of uninsured

degrees, a mild day for mid-February in Oregon. Their legislative champions, including Portland Democrats Sen. Michael Dembrow, Rep. Barbara Smith Warner and Rep. Jennifer

or get commitments for about one-fourth of what we need,” he said. “I do like the model of a shared responsibility.”

The other bill, SB 631, is expected to be heard in March in



Hundreds of gather in Salem to rally for the cause of universal health care Photo by Allen Hallmark

Williamson, spoke at the rally and told them that two bills that aimed to help their cause -- House Bill 2828 and Senate Bill 631 -- will have hearings at the

the Senate Health Committee by Sen. Laurie Monnes Anderson, D-Gresham, a first for an Oregon state single-payer bill, which previously had been



Rogue Valley residents gather for a group picture. A large bus and several carpools brought Rogue Valley residents to Salem on Wed., Feb. 11th, for the big HCAO rally. After the rally the group walked the halls of the Capitol to meet with state legislators. Photo by Allen Hallmark

people in Oregon to 5 percent of the population, a group largely composed of immigrants ineligible for the benefits of Obamacare.

“Basically the Affordable Care Act was a necessary step to get more people covered by healthcare in America, and get rid of practices like excluding people due to pre-existing health conditions,” said Lee Mercer, the president of Health Care for All Oregon and a leader of the Main Street Alliance, a liberal small-business group. “Until we get to a universal healthcare system, we will have a Swiss cheese system of coverage, high copayments and deductibles.”

The organizers picked a good day for the rally of about 200 people. It was overcast but dry, as the temperatures hit 59

Capitol this year.

HB 2828 extends the deadline for a state universal healthcare financing study, and spends state money to pay for the study, which had been ordered by the Legislature in 2013 but has gone unfunded and unable to attract the private investment anticipated.

“I will work to get our healthcare study passed and funded this session,” Williamson told the crowd. She serves on the Committee on Ways & Means, which will appropriate the funds.

Dembrow told The Lund Report that the dollar amount HB 2828 supporters expect to ask for will be close to the \$100,000 suggested in January by Dr. Sam Metz, who has been in charge of raising private funds. “We’ve been able to raise

given air time only in the House Health Committee, chaired by the more liberal Rep. Mitch Greenlick, D-Portland. The bill has little chance of proceeding past a public hearing.

Still, Dembrow was able to attract 27 sponsors this year for SB 631, including three returning Democrats who had not previously supported single-payer -- Sen. Floyd Prozanski of Eugene; Rep. John Lively of Springfield and Rep. Margaret Doherty of Tigard. Dembrow reminded the crowd that passage of a measure like SB 631 will not be something that comes out of the debates of the Oregon Legislature but the work of the grassroots

HEALTHCARE 11

Universal health care advocates renew push toward Medicare-for-all

U.S. Rep. John Conyers says: ‘I believe that a single-payer, universal healthcare system is the only way we can truly reshape our broken system’

BY DEIRDRE FULTON

Single-payer advocates are celebrating the reintroduction of the so-called ‘Medicare-for-All’ bill that would replace the nation’s byzantine healthcare system, dominated by private health insurance companies, with a single, streamlined public agency that would pay all medical claims for the entire population, much like Medicare does for seniors today.

Lead sponsor Rep. John Conyers Jr. (D-Mich) put forth the “Expanded and Improved Medicare for All Act” (H.R. 676) on Tuesday evening, along with 44 other House members. The legislation would create a publicly financed, privately delivered health care system that expands the already existing Medicare program to all U.S. residents and all residents living in U.S. territories. The bill has been defeated in three previous House sessions.

Proponents say the approach would vastly simplify how the nation pays for care, improve patient health, restore free choice of physician, eliminate co-pays and deductibles, and yield substantial savings for individuals, families, and the national economy.

At his website, Conyers says: “I believe that a single-payer, universal healthcare system is the only way we can truly reshape our broken healthcare system.”

Dr. Robert Zarr, president of Physicians for a National Health Program, a non-profit research and educational group of 19,000 doctors nationwide that supports Conyers’s bill, echoed that claim.

“The global evidence is very clear: single-payer financing systems are the most equitable and cost-effective way to assure that everyone, without exception, gets high-quality care,” Zarr said. “Medicare is a good model to build on, and

what better way to observe Medicare’s 50th anniversary year than to improve and extend the program and its benefits to people of all ages?”

The Medicare-for-All bill would be an improvement on the Affordable Care Act, Zarr continued:

[T]he enactment of Rep. Conyers’ bill would take us much further down the road to a humane, just and sustainable health care system than the 2010 health law, which, despite its modest benefits, will not be able to control costs and will still leave 31 million people uninsured in 2024, according to the Congressional Budget Office. Millions more will be inadequately insured, with skimpy coverage.

As a doctor who sees the children of hard-pressed parents every day, I can tell you that the need for fundamental health care reform has never been greater. It’s time to stop putting the interests of private insurance companies and Big Pharma over patient needs. It’s time to adopt a single-payer, improved-Medicare-for-all program in the United States.

Last month, Common Dreams reported that just over 50 percent of Americans—and more than 80 percent of Democrats—say they still support the idea of single-payer healthcare, according to a poll by the Progressive Change Institute.

Meanwhile, the Republican-controlled House voted Tuesday largely along party lines to repeal and replace Obamacare. The legislation is likely to fail in the U.S. Senate and would certainly be vetoed by President Obama should it reach his desk.

House Republicans have moved to repeal all or part of the Affordable Care Act more than 50 times.

Health Care for All Oregon (HCAO) is the a coalition of more than eighty organizations working to create a comprehensive, equitable, publicly funded, high-quality, universal health care system serving everyone in Oregon and in the United States. Find out more about the Rogue Valley Chapter at www.hcao-rv.org

GMO

CONTINUED FROM 1

They claim they will not be able to plant alfalfa for 4 years after this crop is removed, plus other costs of removal and transition. This damages amount imposes such an unacceptable financial burden on the county that it would have to repeal the ordinance, should it lose.

Repeal of the ordinance is the real goal of Monsanto and Syngenta, not payment of damages. That is why the amount of damages is set so high; to frighten the county into believing that this suit would financially burden it, making the ordinance unpopular. ‘...permanently enjoin (prohibit) the enforcement of the ordinance’ is the second demand made in the lawsuit language, but is the primary goal.

Plaintiffs claim they are allowed to grow Roundup Ready (GMO) alfalfa under the State’s Right to Farm and Forestry Act. This is not a Right To Farm and Forestry issue however, but a Responsibility Not To Harm issue. The county ordinance being challenged is based on another pre-existing ordinance making it illegal for agriculture operations to spread harm to neighboring farms due to neglect or other harmful practices. Primarily the old ordinance was directed at pear orchards, from which, if abandoned or misused, harm can spread in the form of disease, pests or cross-pollination to neighboring orchards. The same applies to GMO genetic drift, harming neighboring farms and burdening them with lost sales and remedial costs, if not outright bankruptcy.

The Right To Farm and Forestry law in Oregon was written to allow agriculture and forestry practices to continue in historic and traditional ways despite complaints of ‘nuisance’ (such as odors and noises) by new residences moving into areas historically devoted to agriculture and forestry. GMO genetic trespass is not a ‘nuisance’, it is harm, with profound financial, health and ecological consequences not just to farmers, but to all of Jackson County’s many residents, including those of the natural world.

This lawsuit comes as recent news reveals that China, a huge export market for US farm goods, including Oregon’s, has set strict standards to prevent importing any GMO-contaminated goods. Even the suggestion of GMO contamination means China will reject shipments, as has been done recently. Lawsuits from non-gm growers are mounting, with farmers suing Syngenta for \$1B in lost sales of corn, and Archers-Daniels-Midland, the world’s largest grain merchant, suing for even huger sums. Other large nations such as Russia are rejecting GMO-contaminated farm goods as well. We don’t want Jackson County farmers to be forced to file lawsuits to recoup losses from closing export markets. That would hurt our local economy. Uphold Ordinance 635, and rather than a liability, Jackson County non-GMO corn and alfalfa farmers will have a distinct advantage in foreign markets increasingly eager for non-GMO goods.

We know two members of the County Commission will be gone in the new year, but we expect the new County Commissioners as well to cooperate with any Interveners, and to uphold their responsibilities as our elected officials. We are the 66% who passed Ordinance 635 into law, and we want it to remain.

Let us remember, this lawsuit is just a small part of a world-wide take-over of seed and agriculture by a small cartel of chemical companies. Syngenta was the operator in Jackson County until our voters ejected it, but Syngenta is allied so closely with the 5 other major chemical/GMO corporations, of which Monsanto is the most notorious, that they may as well be one trans-national corporate force. Together they own over 75% and growing of the world’s commercial seed supply.

Anyone who doubts the wide scope and scale of this force need only read the statement Monsanto made immediately after the County of Maui, Hawaii passed a citizens’ initiative this November, declaring a moratorium on the growing of GMO’s until further testing can determine safety:

“...we are concerned about the passage of this initiative and the impact it could have on the community and farming in (the

State). While we understand that people of (the) County have concerns about GMOs, we are confident in the safety of our products and practices that have been reviewed and approved by federal and state agencies. We believe this referendum is invalid and contrary to long established state and federal laws that support both the safety and lawful testing and planting of GMO plants. If effective, the referendum will have significant negative consequences for the local economy, (state) agriculture and our business (in the region). ...we take steps to ask the court to declare that this initiative is legally flawed and cannot be enforced. Monsanto and other allied parties will be joining together in this effort.”

The chemical companies are doing the same in Jackson County, the state of Vermont, and many other jurisdictions around the world. They do so with the cooperation and complicity of government agencies and bodies devoted to the chemical company agenda.

Our County Council is elected to protect the rights and well-being of the residents of Jackson County, but if given the choice between upholding this ordinance and paying \$4.2M, the Council will have to declare that the cost is just too high. The ordinance which 66% of voters agreed on, and many concerned citizens worked hard on throughout a lengthy initiative process and campaign, could be declared null and void.

And then we will see the escalation of toxic GMO’s and their associated poisonous chemicals throughout Jackson County. Some 30 new GMO’s are already awaiting approval, with more to follow, including the even more controversial dsRNA technology. That will presage the end of small family farmers here, as toxic trespass burdens already-marginal farms with further costs and challenges.

Our Family Farms Coalition, the political action committee which along with other groups of concerned citizens oversaw the campaign to pass ordinance 635 into law, is planning intervention in legal defense. The County Council might be reluctant to even spend much of County funds on legal defense, so once again citizens must take up defense of our county from toxic GMO/chemical companies seeking to impose their will.

We will not have it. The people of Jackson County voted in a free and fair election to ban the growing of GMO crops, and rightly so. We cannot let outside chemical companies, and compliant or at least dormant local government, overturn the will of the people. Back in May, locals won out over multi-nationals, and people over money. That must remain.

We are the 66%. For more information and to support the defense efforts, visit: www.ourfamilyfarmscoalition.org



Nonprofits and local farmers win right to defend Jackson County GMO ban

VIA OUR FAMILY FARMS COALITION

Federal Court Magistrate Mark Clarke issued an 8-page Order granting the motion by Center for Food Safety (CFS), Our Family Farms Coalition (OFFC), Oshala Farm and Chris Hardy to intervene as defendants in a pending lawsuit challenging Jackson County’s Ordinance 635, which was approved by voters as Measure 15-119. The ordinance, passed in May 2014, creates a genetically engineered crop free zone to protect local farmers from transgenic contamination.

The decision means that CFS, OFFC, as well as Jackson County farmers Oshala Farm and Chris Hardy will be able to help Jackson County’s lawyers “vigorously defend the legality of protecting family farmers from genetically engineered crops in Jackson County.” The Court found that “[CFS, OFFC, Oshala Farm and Chris Hardy] have alleged concrete agricultural and economic interests that will be just as impacted by this litigation as the interests claimed by the Plaintiffs in this case.” When defending those “concrete agricultural and economic interests” the coalition will be jointly represented by legal counsel from Center for Food Safety and Earthrise Law Center at Lewis and Clark Law School.

“Farmers in Jackson County growing traditional crops are being threatened by crops genetically engineered to survive heavy pesticides. Monsanto and the chemical giants have created a product they can’t control. After the people expressed their will through the democratic process, they turned to the courts to protect their profits. They intimidate and bully with high-priced law firms, but we won’t back down,” said Jackson County farmer and director of Our Family Farms Coalition, Elise Higley.

In May 2014, voters in Jackson County overwhelmingly approved measure 15-119 by a 66 percent to 34 percent margin. The bi-partisan victory came despite a wave of opposition

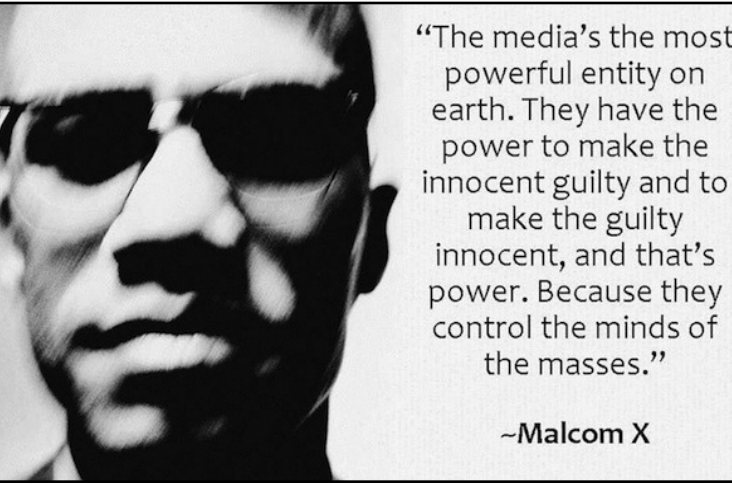
funding from the chemical industry, topping out at nearly \$1 million. These same biotechnology interests challenged the Ordinance in court.

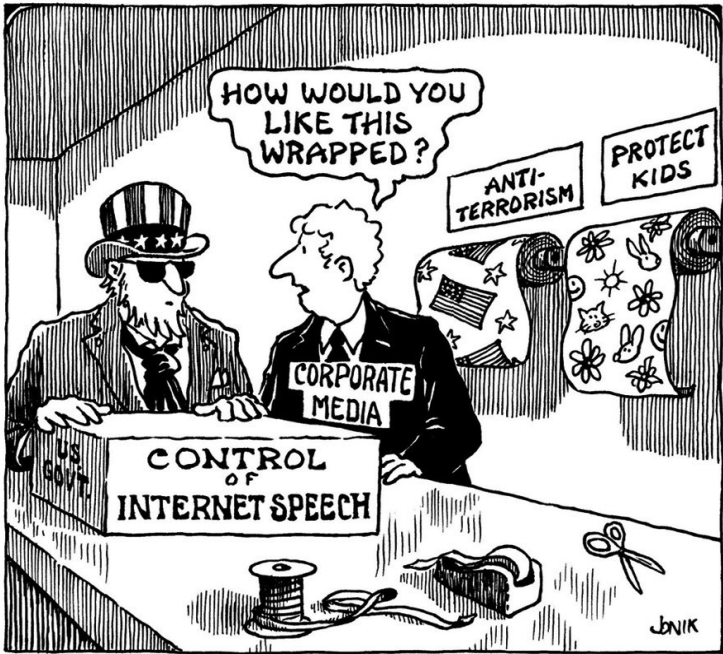
“This is big win for family farmers. The court has correctly recognized local farmers’ right to protect the ordinance, farmers that championed the ordinance and are directly threatened by the lawsuit We’re proud to stand with them and represent them,” said George Kimbrell, CFS’s senior attorney, based in Portland.

Tom Buchele, with the Earthrise Law Center, said, “This is a good start to the case, but its not really surprising given the compelling agricultural and economic interests that farmers growing traditional crops have in seeing the ban on genetically engineered crops upheld and legally enforced.”

Transgenic contamination, the transfer of genetically engineered crops to conventional, organic or wild plants, can happen through cross-pollination, seed mixing or other means throughout agricultural production. When it does happen, traditional farmers lose GE-sensitive domestic and export markets and customers, and contamination episodes in corn, wheat, rice, alfalfa, sugar beets, and other crops have cost U.S. farmers billions of dollars over the past decade. A state-sanctioned Citizens’ Initiative Review (CIR) of the ban, conducted prior to the election, concluded that farms in Jackson County are at “serious” risk of contamination by GE crops. The review also concluded that the initiative would not incur significant enforcement costs.

Over the past decade, numerous counties across the country have passed similar GE crop regulation ordinances including Santa Cruz County, CA, Trinity County, CA, Marin County, CA, Mendocino County, CA, Humboldt County, CA, San Juan County, WA, Maui County, HI, Hawaii County, HI, and numerous cities.





U.S. drops to 49th in world press freedom rankings

BY GLENN GREENWALD

Each year, Reporters Without Borders issues a worldwide ranking of nations based on the extent to which they protect or abridge press freedom. The group's 2015 ranking was released this morning, and the United States is ranked 49th. That is the lowest ranking ever during the Obama presidency, and the second-lowest ranking for the U.S. since the rankings began in 2002 (in 2006, under Bush, the U.S. was ranked 53rd). The countries immediately ahead of the U.S. are Malta, Niger, Burkino Faso, El Salvador, Tonga, Chile and Botswana. Some of the U.S.'s closest allies fared even worse, including Saudi Arabia (164), Bahrain (163), Egypt (158), the UAE (120), and Israel (101: "In the West Bank, the Israeli security forces deliberately fired rubber bullets and teargas at Palestinian journalists"; 15 journalists were killed during Israeli attack on Gaza; and "the authorities also stepped up control of programme content on their own TV stations during the offensive, banning a spot made by the Israeli NGO B'Tselem that cited the names of 150 children who had been killed in the Gaza Strip"). To explain the latest drop for the U.S., the press group cited the U.S. government's persecution of New York Times reporter Jim Risen, as well as the fact that the U.S. "continues its war on information in others, such as WikiLeaks." Also cited were the numerous arrests of journalists covering the police protests in Ferguson, Missouri

(which included The Intercept's Ryan Devereaux, who was tear-gassed and shot with a rubber bullet prior to his arrest). It should come as no surprise that the U.S. continues to plummet in press freedoms under Obama. In October, 2013, the Committee to Protect Freedom issued a scathing denunciation of the U.S. government's attacks on press freedoms, the first time the U.S. was ever the subject of one of its reports. Written by former Washington Post executive editor Leonard Downie, Jr., it detailed the multiple ways the Obama administration has eroded press freedoms, and concluded: The administration's war on leaks and other efforts to control information are the most aggressive I've seen since the Nixon administration, when I was one of the editors involved in The Washington Post's investigation of Watergate. The 30 experienced Washington journalists at a variety of news organizations whom I interviewed for this report could not remember any precedent. That warning echoed the one previously issued by James Goodale, the General Counsel of The New York Times during the Pentagon Papers battle, who said: "President Obama wants to criminalize the reporting of national security information" and "President Obama will surely pass President Richard Nixon as the worst president ever on issues of national security and press freedom."

Who would be affected by \$15 wage?

VIA OREGON CENTER FOR PUBLIC POLICY

Raising Oregon's minimum wage to \$15 per hour by 2018, a proposal currently before the legislature, would constitute great progress for Oregon working families. Here are preliminary estimates of the impact of the proposed raise: By 2018, about 589,000 workers would likely see their wages rise directly as a result of the increase. At the same time, another 114,000 workers earning above \$15 would also likely see their wages increase indirectly as employers adjust overall pay ladders. As a group, workers benefiting directly and indirectly from the increase would gain about \$3.2 billion in additional wages during the three-year implementation period. The gains of particular workers due to raising the minimum wage to \$15 per hour would depend, of course, on their

current hourly wage and number of hours worked. At the high end of the range, Oregonians currently earning the minimum wage of \$9.25 and working 35 hours per week would gain \$10,465 in yearly income, or \$872 per month, assuming their work hours stay the same. About a third of all workers directly benefiting from the increase have children. Among all single-parent workers in the state, almost half would experience wage gains directly as a result of the minimum wage increase. Among workers directly affected by the increase, about 93 percent would be 20 years or older. About three-quarters would be 25 years of age or older. About two out of five would be 40 years of age or older. About 61 percent of workers who would gain a raise would be full-time workers, defined as 35 hours or more worked

per week. Another 30 percent of those helped would be Oregonians working between 20 and 34 hours per week. To review the complete report, visit www.ocpp.org

VOLUNTEER

CONTINUED FROM 3

such as prepping food, serving and cleaning up. The meal is held every Tuesday, 3:00 PM - 6:30 PM. **Economic Justice** - Help represent Peace House in the coalition called Campaign for Economic Justice (CEJ). CEJ meets monthly (except December) on the 4th Monday from 5:30 to 7:15 at the Oregon Education Association building on Highway 99 in south Medford across from the Grange. The coalition works on CEJ's programs, such as Living Wage and organizing a Jackson County Worker Rights Board. **Help represent Peace House in Health Care for All Oregon-Rogue Valley (HCAO-RV)**, part of a statewide coalition working for publicly funded, universal health care coverage. HCAO-RV meets monthly on the 1st Sunday from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. **Israel/Palestine**. Serve on a committee guiding the program. We'd like to organize the committee beginning with the teach-in at SOU on March 11. **Culture of Peace Initiative: Ashland** - Help Peace House participate in the collaborative work, including attending meetings as needed.

Republicans seek to use voter suppression tactics to keep people hungry

BY LAURA CLAWSON

Republicans have come up with another exciting new way to make it difficult for people to use food stamps. Rep. Matt Salmon of Arizona and Sen. David Vitter of Louisiana are pushing similar bills that would require people to produce photo identification to get their Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits. The ID requirement is supposedly going to combat fraud—all 1.3 percent of it. But while there's not much fraud to combat, making people show ID could have a huge effect on those who should be getting the food aid. For one thing, take every story you've ever heard or witnessed in which someone gets all judgey in a grocery line when they see the person in front of them paying for food with an Electronic Benefit Transfer card and multiply that by the extra time it takes for an ID check. In fact, given how rarely grocery stores ask people paying by credit card to show identification, a person in line showing ID would pretty much have a flashing

arrow over their head saying "government assistance." So count this as yet another effort to stigmatize aid recipients. Additionally, while the Salmon and Vitter proposals involve separate identification, a USDA objection to states putting photos on EBT cards themselves highlights another problem: SNAP benefits typically go not to individuals but to households. What if people in the household have different last names and a photo ID of someone legitimately in the household and entitled to use the benefits is refused or even taken as a sign of attempted fraud? Even more seriously, lots of people don't have government-issued photo identification, and as we've seen with voter ID laws, that's particularly true in vulnerable groups: low-income people, women, Latinos, and young adults and elderly people are all substantially less likely to have photo identification. So to get food stamps, you'd have to have something that people who need food stamps are less likely to have.

Healthcare

CONTINUED FROM 9

activists: "The battle for single-payer in this state, the battle for universal healthcare in this state, is not going to happen in this building," he said. "Single-payer is going to come because of your organizing throughout this state." "We're not here for ourselves because we have Medicare," said Corvallis activist Carol Gold to The Lund Report, pointing out her gray hair. "We're here for our children and grandchildren."



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Events and Actions

Young Artists Institute

July 26 - August 1, 2015
Southern Oregon University

Through a partnership with SOU, we are launching a Young Artists Institute. This year, students currently in grades 9-12 will be able to study creative writing and fine arts. In future years, additional art disciplines will be added. We hope this program will eventually rival Interlochen and Idyllwild. Applications will be available at <http://www.sou.edu/youth/young-artists-institute.html>.

The Oregon Center for the Arts Young Artists Institute is a new one-week summer residential program, held in Ashland, Oregon on the Southern Oregon University campus. Students receive first-class instruction by professional artists in creative writing and/or fine arts through intensive hands-on workshops, mentoring, evaluation and presentation of completed works.

Send your letters, articles ,essays, events, announcements and calls to action to RVCP
258 A Street #1 ~ Ashland OR 97520, email editor@rvcommunitypress.com or call 541-622-9483

SO Historical Society history luncheon

Southern Oregon Historical Society History Luncheon! The Southern Oregon Historical Society invites you to lunch, Wednesday, March 11 - at no cost!, other than the donation you choose to make to the Society. In addition to a delicious meal, step back in time and enjoy a fascinating history program

about the Hanley family. SOHS staff and volunteers, dressed in period clothing, enhances this unique hour of fine food and history! Seating is limited to the first 400 guests, and you must be registered to attend. Register on-line, www.sohs.org, or contact Diana Drews, Development Director, at 541-773-6536, ext.

204, or e-mail, development@sohs.org. March 11, Inn at the Commons, 200 North Riverside Avenue; Registration: 11:30am-12pm; Lunch & History Program, 12pm-1pm. Special thanks to the Scott Valley Bank, Medford Fabrication, and the Gold Diggers Guild for sponsoring this event.



USC Annenberg Journalism Fellowship

The USC Annenberg School of Journalism is offering \$2,000-\$10,000 reporting grants to report on health care reform, community health or vulnerable children. The National Health Journalism Fellowship, is open to print, broadcast and online journalists from around the country. The all-expenses-

paid Fellowship includes 4 1/2 days of workshops, seminars and field trips that will enrich your understanding of the challenges facing vulnerable children and their families, including how community conditions help determine their prospects for health and well-being. For more information,

visit ReportingonHealth.org or e-mail Martha Shirk at Cahealth@usc.edu. To improve your prospects for success, we strongly recommend that you discuss your project idea with us in advance (and no later than March 20.)

Library book sale

The Friends of the Medford Library are holding a “Take a Lot – Leave a Little” book sale on Friday, February 27, from 12:00 noon – 3:30 p.m. and Saturday, February 28, from 10:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m., in the Large Meeting Room of the Medford Branch Library, 205 South Central Avenue. This special “sale” lets you take books and donate cash to the Friends of the Medford Library. Proceeds help enhance library programs and services.

OSV Lobby Day

Mark your calendars Oregon Strong Voice Lobby Day March 10th, 9am-3pm, Oregon State Capitol Room 257! This is our chance to have our collective strong voice heard! Please RSVP!
* Lobby training with staff from the UO Labor Education Research Center
* Meet with Legislators to help move Strong Voice priority bills
* Lunch provided!
* RSVP today: <http://bit.ly/osvlobbyday>

Stay Informed

New Day Breakfast takes place on the third Friday of the month. A potluck breakfast begins at 8 AM. After socializing and eating, the presentation starts at 8:30. Starting at 9 AM, we will have time for announcements, requests for collaboration and other issues. For details, visit roguevalleynewdaynetwork.org

Peace House Newsletter
The best local, online source for the latest social justice news and events. <http://alturl.com/8j7zs>

Rogue Valley Community Press
Your community newspaper rvcommunitypress.com

KSKQ 89.5 FM
KSKQ strives to provide opportunities for the community to plug in. Tune in to 89.5 FM every morning from 7-9 am to get the latest news, weather and interviews. Plug in with your groups for PSAs, interviews and event notifications. www.kskq.org

Volunteers Needed:

Volunteers are needed for both the mobile shower unit and the Ashland Community Resource Center. Contact Regina Ayars at 541-482-5019 or reginariley@jeffnet.org if you are interested in volunteering for either of these new and exciting community volunteer opportunities.

Save the Date
SOU 23rd annual Spring Powwow
April 11-12
SOU McNeil Pavilion

Ashland Emergency Food Bank Volunteers Needed

The Food Bank is located at 560 Clover Lane, across from the Holiday Inn Express. For more information, call 541-488-9544 or email owenslyn@gmail.com

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